



Sitecore Case Study:



Second Baptist Church, Houston, TX – This membership-based organization improves their site to increase page views by more than 380%

Summary

For a membership-based organization, communicating effectively with members is key. Second Baptist Church in Houston, TX wanted to keep members and visitors up-to-date and engaged online with information that is personal, relevant and easy to find.

Challenge

Founded in 1927, Second Baptist Church, under the leadership of its current pastor, Dr. Ed Young, has grown from an average weekend worship attendance of 500 in 1978 to over 24,000. Across all five of its Houston area locations or campuses, Second Baptist has just a little more than 51,000 members.

With such a large number of members and a broad demographic spanning from birth to death, communication is a significant challenge. According to David Drinnon, Associate Pastor and Director of IT and Websites, “Our web site is the front door step of our church. Visitors, with few exceptions, visit our website long before they ever visit our church. One challenge was finding a way to appeal to various demographics, while making information more easily accessible.”

Not only was redesigning the forward facing part of the website critical, but Second Baptist needed a better solution for managing its content. Previously, the staff at Second Baptist managed content using a homegrown content management system (CMS), but its design and architecture were very limiting, and the site navigation was overwhelming. Any changes to the navigation or page layout required the support of Second Baptist’s IT team.

Following the launch of their old website, Second Baptist implemented a new church membership management system (ChMS) called iMIS. They needed a means of connecting their website to their ChMS in order to extend the management of its programs and ministries to its leaders and volunteers through a secure login.

Second Baptist Church Site

www.second.org





The goal of Second Baptist's new website was to meet the needs of two specific audiences:

- **Newcomers.** The Second Baptist Church web site is an introduction to those who haven't attended a service yet. The goal was to create a website that connects visitors to the right staff, programs or events and addresses their physical, emotional and spiritual needs.
- **Members.** Second Baptist Church needed a website that both informed members of upcoming events and information, while empowering them to interact and network with each other.

Solution

Working with Roundedcube, a Sitecore partner, Second Baptist Church evaluated Sitecore. Their conclusion was that Sitecore is a very flexible and scalable solution, and would give them the ability to integrate their own customizations.

Chris Castle, Second Baptist's Senior Applications Developer, commented, "Sitecore was very open, and this allowed us to tie in IMIS where needed. We were very happy with that. One of the big drivers was how open and robust and scalable Sitecore is. The openness was key for our IT department. After the implementation, all of that proved to be exactly what we had hoped and more."

Second Baptist was also impressed with how Sitecore incorporated the site's design. Origin Design, out of Houston, provided the design for the site. According

to Castle, "Often when a designer creates a web design using Photoshop, it can look much different once it's implemented in a CMS. However, thanks to the expertise of Roundedcube, and the flexibility of Sitecore, the integrity of the design was preserved. This was a big concern for us, and in the end it ended up not being a concern at all."

The new site was setup to give members a personalized experience and easy-to-find information. The site is organized based on the programming of their five campuses, and each campus has sections that allow members to experience the site based on their chosen demographic, including children, students, and adults. Each section has its own audience-specific design that appeals to the particular group.

When asked about Sitecore's effectiveness, Drinnon said, "Our number one criteria for who we chose to partner with – from design to development to delivery – was a CMS that would allow us to create one site and one experience but give site visitors a more personalized experience based on their demographic. Sitecore has allowed us to manage themes and match the design to the audience. Even if we're adding a page on the fly, we can easily assign the correct theme based on where the page will live on the site."

According to Aaron Branson, Vice President, Roundedcube, "Sitecore gives us the capability to retain the integrity of very sophisticated UI designs. For example, the HTML snippets functionality allowed us to deliver a tool that allows site editors to drop in complex HTML code to quickly and easily add certain design-heavy content."

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Results

With a more intuitive design and richer content, the site is driving members and visitors to where they need to go. Moreover, the site actually runs faster than its predecessor even with the intensity of its visual and multimedia content. By enriching and enhancing their audience's overall experience, Second Baptist has strengthened their relationship with their members and visitors – and the numbers prove it:

Second Baptist Site Statistics:

Before:	With Sitecore:	Difference:
803,000 page views/month	3,047,000 page views/month	380% increase
9 pages/visit	40 pages/visit	444% increase

- **Social networking:** Using RSS feeds, ShareThis, and embed codes, Second Baptist is now able to create content once and feed it into different sites such as Facebook fan pages and staff's personal blogs.
- **Seamless integration with third-party pieces:** Due to the openness of Sitecore, Second Baptist was able to integrate with multiple software packages, and the presentation of the content is seamless to users and visitors.



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**—Chris Castle,
Senior Applications
Developer, Second
Baptist Church**

Other highlights include:

- **Empowered editors:** Today, Second Baptist's Creative Media Department can easily manage content without having to involve the IT department. And with more than 70 site editors now able to contribute to the site, there is a wealth of compelling, updated content that is keeping people coming back.
- **Rich media:** Sitecore enabled Second Baptist to manage all of their media and link to it throughout different areas of the site. Previously, 75-80% of the media wasn't on the site, and what was there wasn't easy to find.

- **Ability to add new sites:** Second Baptist created a portal for their 200+ Bible Study classes whose leaders can log in, post events, news, and email other class members – allowing them to actively participate in their own class. In the first month since going live the class leaders sent over 73,000 emails, and within the first week of the Sitecore site there were more than 1,000 registered users.

Summarizing the before and the after, Castle said, "We went from a bicycle to a luxury car in terms of the feature richness of the site and content standpoint. It is a huge jump for us."



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Technology Description

- **Custom Email workflow submission** – Roundedcube implemented workflow email notifications in this project. When a user submits an item through workflow, an email is automatically sent to everyone in a specified role. This will allow Second Baptist to select and manage the users that receive this email, most commonly content approvers.
- **Sitecore Modules** – Roundedcube integrated the Staging Module as well as the LDAP/AD module for Sitecore 6.
- **Google Mini Search Appliance** – The Google Mini Search Appliance is used for the search on this site. Roundedcube customized this by adding custom meta tags that they would later filter on the search results page so the search results could be narrowed on a per campus basis if needed. They also built a page that outputs links to all the items that would need to be indexed by Google. In addition, they built a user control that displays item-specific information so when the Google Mini Appliance indexed the page, the item could be added to the search collection.
- **Themes** – Roundedcube integrated ASP.NET themes with the look and feel of the site. Each campus has a different theme that is selectable by the content editors. The audience specific pages for children, students, and adults also have specific themes applied to them.

Solution Special Ingredients

SlideShowPro for the Media Center

IMIS for CRM/ChMS

Google Mini Search Appliance for search

ShareTis for linking to community-based sites

Sitecore LDAP Module

Sitecore Staging Module



Sitecore's Web Content Management System (CMS) and portal software solutions enable companies to deliver compelling web experiences. Sitecore's award-winning CMS software makes it easy for businesses to create and update dynamic, full-featured websites of all types. Sitecore's industry leading flexibility and scalability allows companies to better leverage their content, improve customer experience and drive business growth.

Thousands of public and private organizations, including national governments and Fortune 500 companies utilize Sitecore solutions for their websites. These organizations have created and now manage more than 20,000 dynamic websites with Sitecore including Microsoft, Sara Lee, Siemens, Toshiba, Omni Hotels, Computer Associates, ISS and Atlanta Falcons. Sitecore has offices and representatives in more than 50 countries around the world.

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